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SALT LAKE CITY, FEB. 5, 1902.

THE COMING CONVENTION.

Readers of the Deseret News are aware that Governor Heber M. Wells issued a call on Tuesday for an irrigation convention, to be held in the Assembly Hall in this city on February 18, 1902, at 2 p. m. This will be a very important gathering of public and practical men. Everybody interested in the subject of irrigation in this State should endeavor to be present. Word should be sent to every part of the State concerning this meeting and no county should be allowed to go unrepresented. The Governor requests the county commissioners of the several counties to appoint delegates to attend the convention. The number is left to their discretion, in view of the needs of their locality and the importance of the interests in each case.

There will be a full and free discussion of the conditions and needs of irrigation, methods of improvement in the systems adopted in different places, the subject of reservoirs and the conservation of water in other ways, and the best means of distribution. The question of the legal establishment and protection of water-rights will be introduced and also the need of national legislation for the reclamation of arid lands, which is now prominent before the country. It is desirable that all matters relating to these important subjects shall be intelligently presented and the views of the delegates fully obtained.

While the voting on any question or resolution will be by counties through the respective delegates, the convention will be open to all who may be able to attend in that capacity without restriction as to numbers, and all will be permitted to take part in the discussion of the questions introduced. Steps ought to be taken immediately in preparation for this event. Our leading men in every county should aid the county commissioners in securing a full attendance of practical and well-informed men, who understand and can explain the necessities of the country and give suggestions as to what ought to be done to secure the best results.

The great importance of this convention and the good that can be made to grow out of it needs no argument of ours. We think it will press itself upon the understanding of farmers, horticulturists, miners and other toilers, as well as men occupying official positions in our cities and counties. We therefore bespeak a large attendance at this gathering, and hope it will be productive of all the benefits which by this means are possible to be attained.

SHAMEFUL CONTENTIONS.

We hope that people from or at a distance who learn of the contentions in our City Council, will not form their ideas of our citizens from the reports of the debates in that body on the subject of the police department and its management. Anyone not acquainted with the facts would imagine from what has been published, that the police department of Salt Lake City was a disorderly band of contending forces without a head and without responsibility. They would also come to the conclusion that the members of the City Council were a lot of wrangling politicians and sectaries, with personal animosities to grind and animosities to gratify. This, however, would be largely an incorrect view of the situation.

That there has been some hostile feeling in the police department has been evident for some time. But that it has permeated the whole force we believe is untrue. Rumors of this kind are not new by any means. They were rife under former administrations. No doubt they were always more or less exaggerated. But we believe the facts will bear us out in stating, that the reported insubordination and lack of acknowledgment of the authority of the Chief by the men under his command, have been manufactured for the purpose of injuring him and accomplishing certain results that have been desired by his opponents.

The step taken on Tuesday evening in the City Council for the removal of three officers in the police department, was doubtless intended to settle such disagreement as has arisen therein. We believe that to be the full and entire purpose of the undertaking. The bitter spirit displayed by some members of the City Council in this matter does not redound to their credit. We cannot see why such matters cannot be discussed in a dignified and decent manner. The personalities indulged in are disgraceful and ought to be stopped by the presiding officer. They are entirely out of place in such a body, and are after for a noisy bur-row or a gathering in a dog-fight. The respectable people of this city are disgusted with such exhibitions and they ought to be stopped

without hesitation by the majority of the Council.

Ever since the opening of the present administration there have been remarks made with the apparent purpose of reopening old antagonisms, and showing plainly that the disposition to make attacks on religious grounds influences the words and acts of two or three individuals. The terms "Mormon" and "Gentile" have been flung in the faces of opposing members, and there has been an evident intent to promote angry feelings and raise a division between "Mormon" and non-"Mormon" elements. This ought not to be encouraged by any person or paper. Of course the people who elected such persons to office, knowing their extreme feelings and the sentiments which inspire them, are to blame for putting them in the places they occupy. Contentions on these old lines is out of place and is not endorsed by the best elements on either side.

The insinuation made in the City Council on Tuesday evening that the business of that body is to be "transacted at the Church office," is utterly false and extremely ill-advised. The authorities of the "Mormon" Church have taken no part whatever in the dispute that has arisen over the attempt to remove the Chief of Police. There was no necessity for dragging them into this contention. It will accomplish no good purpose. There is not the slightest foundation in truth for the suggestion. We do not believe that the members who uttered it believed there was any truth in that which he set forth. It was one of those ebullitions of spite which have been common in his utterances when at a loss for a real argument to sustain his side of a public question. It is hurled at gentlemen who are known to be members of the "Mormon" Church, for the purpose of inciting them into a course contrary to their own convictions of what is right and best for the public interest. We are pleased to see that the scheme does not work. It ought not to weigh a feather in the scale. They should do their duty and stand by their convictions in spite of all such unworthy and irrelevant attacks.

The same member predicted the present state of things in the Council for two years. That prophecy will probably be fulfilled, if notice is taken of his turbulent and disorderly harangues by the rest of the Council. If peace, good order and right government are desired, such inflammatory speeches as those in which he delights should be stopped at once by the presiding officer, or passed by in utter silence and contempt by the members. They should elicit no reply. Let the City Council go on with its business, attend to the duties of the hour, and by silence show the futility of those unseemly interjections and the disgust that is felt at them by right-minded men.

The press of this city should take the side of decency and decorum, and not aid demagoguery and anti-religious outbursts by any appearance of sanction to such proceedings. The Deseret News has taken no side in the dispute that has arisen in regard to the attempted removal of the chief of police, nor in reference to the actual removal of three disturbing elements on the police force. The Council has well considered the subject and the majority have taken consistent ground. We suppose the three officers removed are non-"Mormons." And this perhaps has given rise to the notion that religious distinctions are being made. We do not believe there is anything to justify the belief. No such motives should enter into the course of any public officer or public body.

The appointment of non-"Mormons" to fill their places would, in our opinion, be a complete answer to the groundless charge. But we do not desire to influence the chief or the Council in this direction. A man's religious opinions or status should not be considered at all either one way or the other. That contention should be forever banished from our public affairs. We protest against its revival. We deny most emphatically that the Church has taken any hand in the dispute that has arisen over the police question, and we regret exceedingly that the accusation has been made or any insinuation in relation to it has been entertained by any portion of the public. All we desire, in this connection, is good government and decent conduct on the part of public officers.

MUST OBEY PARENTS.

According to a report in the Baltimore Sun, Associate Judge Motter, of the circuit court of Frederick county, has just decided that a person who has not attained his or her majority cannot lawfully join a church without the consent of the parents. No matter how intelligent or well informed the person may be, he is under the control of the guardians in such matters, until the age of majority is reached. The decision is said to have attracted much attention.

The case concerned one Miss Bender, a 17-year-old domestic in the employ of a preacher of the Dunkard faith, Dr. P. D. Fahrney. The girl desired to join the Dunkards, and the time was appointed for her baptism. But the parents objected, on the ground that she was not physically strong enough to be immersed. The baptism was then postponed. But not yet satisfied, the father endeavored to induce her to leave the Dunkards entirely. This she refused to do.

Mr. Bender then obtained a writ of habeas corpus to have his daughter produced in court. The court decided that as long as she was under age, she was amenable to the orders of her parents, but the final arrangement was made between the contending parties that the girl should be at liberty to receive the initiatory rite in the spring if she so desired. "Personally," the judge said to an interviewer, "I do not see why a parent should not exercise the same authority over a child's religious actions that the law permits in other matters."

The principle here laid down is certainly correct, although it may be questioned whether the age limit laid down by law is proper in questions pertaining to religion. That is open to debate. But there can be no doubt that parents are responsible for their children until these have obtained that

age of discrimination, in which they can choose for themselves between truth and error. But with responsibility follows necessarily authority to guide and direct. Parental responsibility cannot exist without such authority. It is upon the parents that the duty devolves to teach their children "to walk uprightly before the Lord," and, consequently, to see to it that no teaching contrary to this is imparted. People eager to make proselytes and add names to church rolls, often violate this simple principle of justice. They often ignore the authority of heads of families and needlessly cause strife.

The Dunkards are considered a very quaint sect. They originated in Germany, spread to Holland, and from there to Pennsylvania. They have no saluted preachers, believe in baptism by immersion, and do not permit members to follow the fashions in the matter of dress. Gay ornaments and jewelry are prohibited. Miss Bender is said to have been very fond of finery and her determination to join a sect which looks upon the wearing of ornaments as a sin indicates her sincerity. The Dunkards do not have much success in making converts, owing to the ascetic tendencies of their doctrines and their failure to provide a living for exponents of their faith, and also to another still more important fact that they have no special authorized message to deliver to the world in this age.

CHURCH STATISTICS.

The statistics of the churches in the United States as made public by Rev. Dr. Carroll, who had charge of that part of the country's census, show some remarkable features.

One is the enormous growth of the Roman Catholic church, which is credited with an increase, for the past year, of 185,000. It is alleged, however, that this represents, in fact, an increase of several years instead of one year, but even if it is only half correct, it is a far larger growth than any other body can show, the next to it being the Protestant Episcopal church, which reported an increase of 11,741. The total membership of the Roman church in this country is now given as 9,153,741. It is the numerically strongest religious body in the country. It contains nearly one-third of all the church communicants in the country.

Another notable feature is found in the figures relating to the Latter-day Saints. The Church is credited with a membership of 300,000, and an increase for the year of 65,000. This latter figure is probably much too high, but even measured in per centage, would be several times greater than that of any other church in the country. Last year the Latter-day Saints ranked as number nineteen in point of numbers. This year they held the fifteenth rank.

The total church membership is given as 23,090,637. This would leave about 45,000,000 people in this country without membership in any church. A great number of these may be accounted for as being children of church people not yet enrolled, since some denominations do not include such children in their statistics. But even after that deduction is made, it is evident that over half of the population of the country are outside the churches. And yet, this is, we are told, a "Christian" country! Among the sects themselves, the tendency to divide and to perpetuate sects is very prominent. There are various kinds of Methodists; twenty-two different Lutheran bodies, and twelve kinds of Presbyterians.

Noting the general increase of church membership which barely holds its own as compared to the increase of the population, there is very little ground for satisfaction. If the religious workers of this country are not content with small results gained by enormous efforts, they should consider earnestly the causes of defeat. They would find, then, that one is the spirit of narrow-mindedness that prompts them to pay more attention to the correction of alleged heresies among their brethren, than to the salvation of that which is lost. As long as the spirit of contention rules, the Spirit of God cannot operate in power.

The crowds that greet Sweeney are the crowds that cheer.

The Country club will hire a golf coach. Why not hire a coach and four?

Tanmany wants to lift up New York. Otherwise, Tanmany wants to make a raise.

Women care more about what Mrs. Depev wears than what Senator Depev says.

By way of reparation for excluding the Chinese the door will be kept open in China.

The student who translated "Circle d'river" city council was not so far wrong after all.

The Utah national guard has been furnished with new rifles. They are very "killing" affairs.

Were it not for the disturbance over the police department, peace would reign throughout the city.

Kansas wants to enjoin Colorado from using the waters of the Arkansas river. And yet Kansas is a prohibition state.

A Kansas City woman has had two divorces from one man. She is unable to decide whether or not marriage is a failure.

General Miles says he is not seeking the presidency. And the presidency is not seeking him, which about balances the account.

St. Louis should dispose of its bribery cases before the great exposition opens. They would not look well along side the Model City that is to be.

W. T. Stead says that America is the reigning port for the best of Europe. He must have been in a meeting mood when he said this.

should either be sent to jail or an insane asylum.

Perdue university, at Lafayette, Ind., is making a collection of historic engines. It will require a very large round house to hold them.

Venezuela may yet learn to appreciate the fact when it comes to settling scores with France, that "they do these things better in France."

New York is going to try and revive "Othello." Why does not some one try and revive Desdemona? She needs aid much worse than the Moor.

Lord Lansdowne's reply to Dr. Kuyper's note regarding peace negotiations reads as though it came from a conqueror instead of from a combatant.

It is said that the retirement of Lord Salisbury from office will be coincident with the close of the Boer war. It will probably be in the distant future for the Boer war is far from being a closed incident.

Governor Taft warned the Senate Philippine committee not to believe all that was written in letters from the islands. It is good advice. It would have been better had he advised them to take all information from the islands with large grains of salt.

Mr. Louis F. Burchard, who has just been appointed to an important government post in New York, authorizes the announcement that he is not related to the late Rev. Dr. Burchard of "Rum, Romanism and Rebellion" fame. The apology and explanation are accepted.

It is always better to get the best when you are able to do so. Therefore, the order signed by Adjutant-General C. S. Burton of the National Guard of Utah, for the exchange of the old Springfield rifles for modern firearms, is good economy and will be encouraging to our volunteers. It is right that the State should be well-armed in addition to being forearmed. We hope the boys will "stand to their guns" with renewed vigor and alacrity, when they receive their new rifles and will be proud to "present arms."

The bill in Congress to raise the salaries of United States judges may be considered by some people a needless extra expense to the country. But if it will secure the services of the very highest ability, and the occupants of the money well spent. The higher courts of the land should command the very best ability, and the occupants of the bench should be placed above all inducements likely to sway them in rendering just judgment. The bill is all right and ought to become a law.

The polite, elegant and consistent (?) Mayor-Dr. Editor of the Ogden Standard, in his usual rich and racy style, calls this city "a toothless old hag, known to the banditti as Mother Salt Lake." That is because the business men here are endeavoring to explain to railroad magnates, the benefits which would arise from making the contemplated cut-off from Lucin come by way of the southern end of the great Salt Lake. Of course the "argument" offered against that movement in the choice language of the Standard writer, will put an end to their efforts and convince the railway authorities that Ogden alone is fit for direct railway communication east and west, and cause the treacherous route across the briny waters to appear both economical and advantageous. Further contention might as well cease at once.

WAR TAX COMMENTS.

Cleveland Plain Dealer.
If the House agrees with the ways and means committee, which is not unlikely under the "tamming" through system to which "consideration" of bills in the House has been reduced, a bill repealing all the Spanish war revenue taxes except the tax on mixed flour will be sent to the Senate. What the Senate will do in the case is another matter. That body takes time for discussion and sometimes changes measures after they have been shaped up by the committee in charge.

San Francisco Chronicle.
It is reported that when the bill repealing the war taxes which will doubtless be passed by the House, reaches the Senate, the finance committee will take it a rider making substantial concessions to Cuban sugar and tobacco. If the senators opposed to "reciprocity" are strong enough to strike off this rider in the Senate the way will be clear. If they are not, they will be confronted with the alternative of giving the sugar trust its way in regard to Cuban sugar or voting against the removal of the war taxes. It is supposed that the sentiment for "reciprocity" is stronger in the Senate than in the House—possibly because the people do not vote directly for senators next fall—and it is possible that the two houses may come to a conflict over this bill. It depends upon how resolute the senators are who are in favor of protection.

San Francisco Call.
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Los Angeles Express.
Proposals to repeal the internal revenue taxes levied during the Spanish-American war will meet with general approval. But there may be partial grounds for regret when the nation figures up the many things it would like to buy and knows that Congress often has a cheese-paring disposition when really meritorious propositions are made to it. There is reclamation of arid lands and improvement of rivers and harbors, for instance. But the stamp taxes are of that direct and apparent sort which always has, and always will, create opposition.

Milwaukee Wisconsin.
We have Cuba and the Philippines on our hands, and a large projected increase of the navy. With these possibilities in view, in two or three years the surplus will diminish to a very

small sum. The river and harbor appropriation bill, which failed at the last session of Congress, carried appropriations to the amount of \$5,000,000. That, or a similar bill, will pass at the present session, and so \$5,000,000 must be added to the legitimate expenses of the government after July 1. The fact that the ways and means committee was unanimous in its report proves that there is a demand from all sections of the country for the abolition of the Spanish war taxes.

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